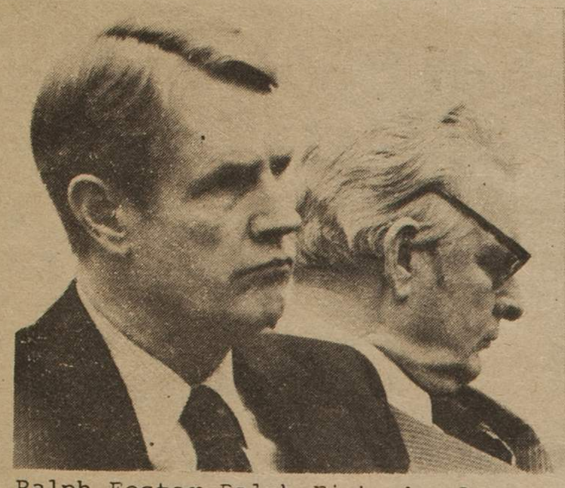


Ralph Foster, Ralph Fiebach of KG&E

KCP&L's Vice-Pres. Arthur Doyle

Representative Ben Foster

KP&L's Pres. William Wall

WHO CONTROLS THE LIGHT CO. ?

Utility executives' sadness pervaded the room. Out of the woodwork these masters of Kansas destiny were forced. Kansas utility customers won a partial victory from the special Kansas Legislative hearings (April 13 and 19) on the sale by Kansas City Power and Light Co. (KCP&L) of 17% of the Wolf Creek Nuclear Generating Station to the Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD). The committee recommendation , however, will not have an immediate impact on the continued construction at Wolf Creek.

Legislators learned from the hearings that the state has no control over the sale of a part or a whole interest in the plant at Wolf Creek to out-of-state utilities.

Fred Adams of the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) testified that the KCC could not deny a construction permit solely on that basis. The special invest tigative committee also concluded that the Kansas Legislature wasn't "intentionally misled." This conclusion came despite the conflicting information presented by utility officials at the hearings.

KCP&L officials initially stated numerous times to the committee that no sale of the plant had been offered before October 1977.

Arthur Doyle, KCP&L executive vice-president, had testified to legislative committees in September and August that almost all of KCP&L's Wolf Creek's capacity was needed for existing customers.

KCP&L officials revealed during the second day of hearings that they had offered part of Wolf Creek to NPPD last June but had been turned down. A subsequent offer in late January 1978 was accepted.

As a result of the investigation, some changes are likely that may protect Kansas utility customers in the future. The hearing testimony led lawmakers to adopt these recommendations to the legislature:

1) that there is "no evidence of intentional misrepresentations" to the legislature by KCP&L, but that KCP&L had "failed to advise" lawmakers of the impending sale, even though they knew it was a serious proposal
2) that the legislature repeal the "grandfather clause" that prohibits the KCC from approving or disapproving any future construction or additional proposed generating units at Wolf Creek or the Jeffrey Energy Center (being constructed by Kansas Power and Light close to St. Mary's, Kansas)
3) that a legislative summer interim study be made of the KCC's authority over construction and state-wide coordination of power plants
4) that the State Water Resources Board be directed to draft standards and guidelines for the sale of a part interest in a power plant operating under a state water contract.

The hearings revealed that a guaranteed source of uranium fuel for the Wolf Creek plant has not been obtained. This is necessary because Westinghouse partially withdrew from its original uranium supply contract in 1975. Westinghouse is now only responsible for the first core load (which lasts 3 years). Right now KG&E is busy drilling holes in New Mexico looking for uranium. Sure hope they find some.

Kansas Gas and Electric (KG*E) had stated, in rate hearings earlier in the month, that they faced immediate financial problems if they were denied any part of their requested rate hike. KG&E is doubling the worth of their company in 6 years. An unbelieveable task in the annuls of Kansas history. Any minor setback such as not selling as much electricity as they planned is serious. KG&E's recent batting average at growth figures has been pathetic.

Michael Viren, head of the utilities division of the Missouri Public Service Commicsion (MPSC), the Missouri equivalent of the KCC, tesitifed that KCP&L and KG&E had greatly overestimated their future growth the past few years. KCP&L was ordered by MPSC to improve their growth forecasting methods.

Viren noted that better forecasting methods were adopted by

KCP&L and that given their decision to push ahead with Wolf Creek, that the sale to NPPD was prudent because it relieved their customers of the burden of paying for unnecessary power plant capacity. Viren, a former nuclear engineer, said he personally did not favor the nuclear plant.

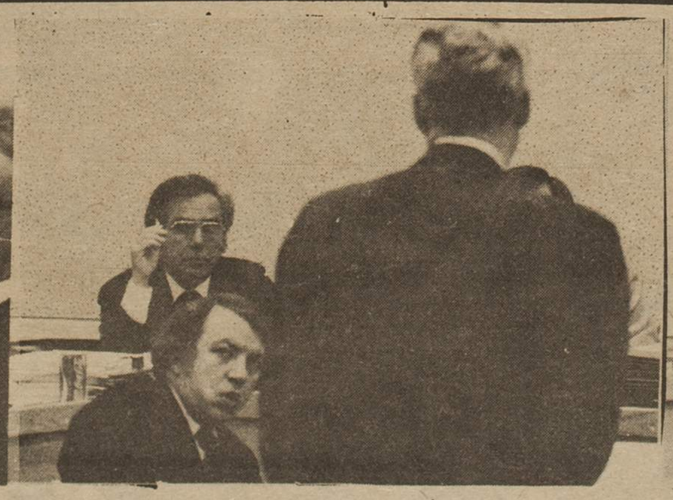
Once nuclear fuel is used in a plant, the waste fuel must be reprocessed and stored somewhere. This country has no reprocessing plants in operation and no answer to the storage problem. Some experts inferred from testimony that Wolf Creek would, at least temporarily, hold nuclear waste from plants in other areas that have overcrowded their own waste storage areas.

The hearings graphically illustrated results of poorly coordinated utility growth in Kansas. The results are less efficient and more costly electrical service for Kansas electric customers.

The huge amounts of money needed for building these new plants require statewide public supervision. The KCC will become more active as a result of these hearings. Whether the public's future financial, safety, and energy interests are protected still remains to be seen.

People's Energy Project

POWER FOR PEOPLE, NOT PROFIT!



written by Steve Treaster

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